

105TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. RES. 466

Condemning the brutal killing of Mr. James Byrd, Jr.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 11, 1998

Ms. WATERS (for herself, Mrs. NORTHUP, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. CLAY, Mr. STOKES, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. DIXON, Mr. OWENS, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. NORTON, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mrs. CLAYTON, Mr. BISHOP, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. HILLIARD, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. MCKINNEY, Mrs. MEEK of Florida, Mr. RUSH, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. WATT of North Carolina, Mr. WYNN, Mr. THOMPSON, Mr. FATTAH, Ms. JACKSON-LEE, Mr. JACKSON, Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD, Mr. CUMMINGS, Ms. CARSON, Ms. CHRISTIAN-GREEN, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. FORD, Ms. KILPATRICK, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Ms. LEE, Mr. GEPHARDT, Mr. BONIOR, Mr. TURNER, Mr. LAMPSON, Mr. GONZALEZ, Mr. FROST, Mr. STENHOLM, Mr. HALL of Texas, Mr. ORTIZ, Mr. EDWARDS, Mr. GREEN, Mr. BENTSEN, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. RODRIGUEZ, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. REYES, Mr. SANDLIN, Mr. GINGRICH, Mr. ARMEY, Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma, Mrs. TAUSCHER, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. HASTERT, Mr. BOEHNER, Ms. DUNN of Washington, Ms. PRYCE of Ohio, Mr. LINDER, Mr. FAZIO of California, Mrs. KENNELLY of Connecticut, Mr. TRAFICANT, Mr. McNULTY, Mr. WAMP, Mr. SHAYS, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mrs. CHENOWETH, Mr. SISISKY, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. FURSE, Mr. MILLER of California, Mr. OLVER, Ms. HARMAN, Mrs. BONO, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. BACHUS, and Mr. POSHARD) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

JUNE 11, 1998

Committee on the Judiciary discharged; considered and adopted

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## RESOLUTION

Condemning the brutal killing of Mr. James Byrd, Jr.

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1       *Resolved,*

2   **SECTION 1. FINDINGS.**

3       The House of Representatives finds as follows:

4           (1) Mr. James Byrd, Jr., a 49-year-old disabled  
5       African American male from Jasper County, East  
6       Texas, was last seen walking home from a niece's  
7       bridal shower on June 6, 1998, and allegedly was of-  
8       fered a ride by 3 young white men, who then pro-  
9       ceeded to physically and mercilessly beat Mr. Byrd  
10      in Jasper, Texas, then chained him to the back of  
11      a pickup truck and dragged him until the torso of  
12      his body was torn to pieces.

13          (2) Mr. James Byrd, Jr.'s body was found Sun-  
14      day, June 7, 1998, on a bumpy, winding country  
15      road about 10 miles from his Jasper home, at the  
16      end of a trail of blood along a 2-mile stretch of road  
17      with his head, neck, and right arm severed.

18          (3) Mr. Byrd was so brutally disfigured that his  
19      head and torso were completely severed, with his  
20      head, neck, and right arm found about a mile away,  
21      and only finger prints could be used to identify him.

22          (4) Mr. Lawrence Russell Brewer, 31, of Sul-  
23      phur Springs, Texas and Mr. Shawn Allen Berry,  
24      23, and Mr. John William King, 23, of Jasper,  
25      Texas, all of whom have past criminal records and

1 have served time in prison or were on probation,  
2 have been charged with murder and are being held  
3 without bail.

4 (5) The police released an affidavit of probable  
5 cause in which Mr. Berry said they had been out  
6 drinking and picked up Mr. Byrd as he walked down  
7 Martin Luther King Drive in Jasper early Sunday.

8 (6) Mr. Berry said that he stopped at a conven-  
9 ience store, but Mr. King was angry that he was giv-  
10 ing a ride to a black man, so he took over at the  
11 steering wheel and drove to a remote area 7 miles  
12 outside of town, where they killed Mr. Byrd.

13 (7) The 3 men were known to be members of  
14 various hate groups, including the Ku Klux Klan  
15 and the Aryan Brotherhood.

16 (8) This was not a random act of violence, but  
17 a senseless, hate-filled crime.

18 (9) The Federal Bureau of Investigation also is  
19 investigating to see if the 3 could be charged with  
20 violating Mr. Byrd's Federal civil rights.

21 (10) One of the suspects allegedly said that  
22 they wanted to "start the Turner Diaries early," re-  
23 ferring to a novel about race war that is popular  
24 reading among some hate groups and white su-  
25 premacists.

1           (11) This incident is reminiscent of the brutal  
2       slayings that occurred at the turn of the century and  
3       in the 1920s and 1930s, with brutal hangings which  
4       brought the National Association for the Advance-  
5       ment of Colored People into existence and contrib-  
6       uted to its growth in its early days.

7           (12) This and similar incidents threaten the  
8       peaceful coexistence, security, and foundation of all  
9       communities.

10 **SEC. 2. CONDEMNING THE KILLING OF JAMES BYRD, JR.**

11       The House of Representatives—

12           (1) condemns the actions which occurred in  
13       Jasper, Texas as unacceptable and outrageous, to be  
14       condemned by all people of all races, creeds, and re-  
15       ligions;

16           (2) pledges to do everything in its power, in-  
17       cluding holding public hearings, to probe the under-  
18       lying causes of this brutal killing and to make sure  
19       that the United States does not return to the days  
20       when such hatred, brutality, violence, hangings, and  
21       murder were deemed acceptable;

22           (3) calls on the Federal Bureau of Investiga-  
23       tion, the Department of Justice, the White House,  
24       and all other Federal law enforcement agencies to  
25       conduct an immediate, full, and fair investigation

1       into all of the facts of the case to aggressively re-  
2       spond to this tragedy with indictments, and urges  
3       the prosecution proceed aggressively with a fair but  
4       speedy trial;

5           (4) calls upon each Member of Congress and  
6       every citizen of the United States, in his or her own  
7       way, through his or her church, synagogue, mosque,  
8       workplace, or social organization, to join in denounce-  
9       ing and getting others to denounce this outrageous  
10      murder of another human being; and

11          (5) pledges to join in efforts to bring an end to  
12      racism and an end to the fear and hatred which un-  
13      derlie it, and to encourage all Americans to dedicate  
14      themselves to ending racism and violence in the  
15      United States.

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